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New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 136 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/64/631)

The Acting President: I should like, in keeping with established practice, to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/64/631, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the Assembly that 19 Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I would like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter, a Member of the United Nations that is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the information contained in document A/64/631?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 70 (*continued*)

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

(a) Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Draft resolutions (A/64/L.42 and A/64/L.43)

The Acting President: We meet today to consider the humanitarian situation in Haiti. More than a week after the earthquake struck Haiti, we are only beginning to realize the full extent of the loss of life and the horrendous destruction. On behalf of the President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Ali Treki, and all Member States, I would like to express my heartfelt condolences to all Haitians, as well as to the families of all United Nations staff and peacekeepers who lost their lives, who have been injured or who have seen their colleagues and friends suffer as a result of this disaster.

We recognize the sacrifice of each United Nations staff member. We pay special tribute to Special Representative Hédi Annabi, Deputy Special Representative Luiz Carlos da Costa and Acting Police Commissioner Doug Coates. Our thoughts, sympathies and support are with their families and friends at this difficult time.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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The immediate response of the international community to the earthquake was a remarkable example of solidarity with the people and the Government of Haiti. The humanitarian assistance that is being delivered is providing relief and beginning to meet some of the urgent needs of the people of Haiti, but much more needs to be done.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his leadership in ensuring a speedy response by the United Nations system. In particular, I acknowledge the efforts of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in leading the coordination of the international response to this tragic event and in launching the humanitarian appeal. I would also like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other United Nations agencies. We also appreciate the role of President Bill Clinton, Special Envoy of the United Nations to Haiti, in mobilizing international support for relief operations.

We offer our thanks to the rescue and relief teams that have come from all over the world since the first hours after the earthquake. With so much outpouring of support, public and private, we are still struggling with coordination. Obviously, more needs to be done urgently to reach those most desperately in need of water, food, medical supplies and shelter. The speedy delivery of those essential items is crucial in order to save lives and relieve suffering. I believe that, in order to be more effective, relief efforts also need to involve and mobilize Haitians themselves.

I pay tribute to the Government of Haiti, which, despite having suffered immense losses of personnel, infrastructure and resources, has been able to assist its population and to maintain order under these challenging circumstances. I would like to pay tribute to the people of Haiti, who have shown great courage, perseverance and dignity in the face of this national and personal tragedy. I am pleased that the whole membership is coming together to express its support to the Government and the people of Haiti. This is an occasion to reiterate our full commitment to the provision of immediate relief and emergency assistance to the people of Haiti.

Beyond that, it is crucial to ensure support for the even more difficult task of the long-term reconstruction and development of Haiti. It will require the sustained focus and attention of the international community in the months and years ahead. The entire United Nations system, as well as the international financial institutions and development agencies, will have a key role to play in that regard.

I believe that the example set by the United Nations and its Member States — speaking with a single voice and acting in unison in full support of Haiti, its Government and its people — reaffirms the common humanity that is the moral basis of the Organization and of the international community.

I now invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of those who lost their lives in this disaster.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: Ten days after the earthquake in Haiti, the scale of the disaster has become clear. According to Government estimates, at least 75,000 people have been killed, 200,000 have been injured and 1 million have been displaced. But of course, we do not yet have a complete tally. Search and rescue teams — more than 50 from around the world — have spent the past week looking for survivors. At last count, they had rescued 123 people alive from the rubble. The search continues.

As many as half the buildings in parts of Port-au-Prince may have been destroyed or damaged. Towns to the south-west of the city have seen even greater destruction. Food, water, medicine and shelter are all in short supply. Three million people need help. Two million people require food assistance. One million people are homeless. The Haitian authorities have been very hard hit. Most ministries have been destroyed, as has key infrastructure, including electricity and water supplies. Schools were destroyed, as were prisons. More than 4,000 prisoners escaped from the national penitentiary in Port-au-Prince.

The United Nations itself, as we are all acutely aware, suffered its single greatest loss of life in the history of the Organization. As of yesterday, 70 United Nations staff members had perished, with 146 as yet unaccounted for. Those include many national staff members whose whereabouts we are still trying to determine, but we must expect that the death toll will continue to rise.

In responding to Haiti's immense needs, the United Nations has three priorities. The first is the humanitarian relief operation. Coordination and logistics are crucial. We must work even more closely with our partners — Governments, non-governmental organizations, relief organizations and, of course, the Haitian authorities.

The second priority is security. Without it, there can be no effective humanitarian relief effort, or basis for reconstruction. That is why I am grateful that Member States have responded so quickly to our appeal for additional police and soldiers.

The third priority is the future. In the coming weeks and months, we will need to shift from emergency response to longer-term relief and recovery. We must help the Haitian Government to reconstitute itself. We must help to restore basic services and revive the economy. And we need to turn disaster into opportunity.

Our response has been swift and we have made progress on all three objectives. Despite suffering devastating losses, United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) troops and police have cleared main roads, removed bodies and conducted patrols with the Haitian National Police, which is gradually recovering from its own losses.

As of today, the security situation in Haiti remains stable. The United Nations is playing the principal coordinating role, working with the Government of Haiti in ensuring security. Incidents of looting and unrest remain the exception, despite some news reports to the contrary. MINUSTAH's military component is closely cooperating with United States and Canadian forces. I am also grateful to troop-contributing countries from Latin America — including Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay — and from other regions for their spontaneous response to the request for additional troops and police for MINUSTAH.

I have instructed my Special Representative to ensure that all available assets are put to work in support of the humanitarian effort. Member States from all regions have also generously contributed relief supplies, sent in personnel and deployed troops.

The United States, in cooperation with the United Nations, is managing the airport. United Nations staff members from our relief agencies are helping to prioritize landing slots for humanitarian flights. The seaport of Port-au-Prince is being repaired and is operating again, at limited capacity.

A humanitarian corridor connecting the affected areas to the Dominican Republic is becoming a major staging area for assistance. We are grateful to the Dominican Republic for its great assistance. As a result, food distribution has now reached half a million people, and is being scaled up to reach 2 million people over the coming weeks.

Drinking water is reaching at least 200,000 people per day. Eighteen permanent health facilities and temporary field hospitals are now operating, as is a medical ship sent by the United States. Last Friday, a flash appeal for $575 million was launched to cover 3 million people for six months. So far, $334 million have been contributed and pledged. That includes $25 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), which would not have been possible without the 60-plus Member States that have already contributed to CERF this year.

I am proud of the United Nations response. Seldom in the face of such disaster has the international community acted in such solidarity and so quickly in the face of so many difficulties. That said, despite all our best efforts, too many people have not received the assistance they urgently need. The immediate priorities continue to be medical assistance, water, sanitation, food and shelter, as well as fuel and transportation equipment to support the relief operation. I urge Member States to make additional contributions to the flash appeal.

At the same time, we need to set our sights beyond the immediate emergency. Before the earthquake, Haiti was making progress. Thanks in large part to MINUSTAH, it was enjoying a new measure of political stability. The economy was growing and investors were coming into the country. From afar, it might look as though all that progress has been lost. But that is not so. Handled properly, this disaster may offer us an opportunity to build back better, as United Nations Special Envoy Bill Clinton has put it.

We not only need to restore Government — we need to improve governance. We not only need to rebuild the police and the justice system — we want to help them become a better police and more capable justice system. We not only need to rebuild factories — we need to create the right environment for investors to build more factories and create an export system that

takes full advantage of the opportunities for new growth. Among those is the tariff-free market opening to the United States under its existing Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement legislation.

We also need to provide jobs, not only to those who lost their jobs last week, but also to the millions of Haitians who did not have a job in the first place. The people of Haiti are not looking for handouts. During my recent visit, I met many ordinary people on the streets. Yes, they needed water, food and medicine. But beyond that they told me that they need one thing above all else: jobs. They want to work to rebuild their lives. They want to work to rebuild Haiti. They want a future that offers stability, dignity and hope. We have a concrete plan to help.

Right now, we are seeking $41 million through a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) flash appeal to support a programme we call cash-for-work. We want to scale that up. Imagine what could be done with a cash-for-work programme two or three times larger. This is a programme to help Haitians help themselves by paying them to remove debris from the streets, to do demolition and reconstruction, and to help to deliver aid and construct camps for the homeless. The cost is $5 per person per day. With $5 per day, a worker can take care of his or her family. That money will begin to circulate through the economy, supporting small businesses and banks. That money will stimulate the economy and give Haitians hope. It will create more jobs.

Jobs like that are the social concrete and mortar that will hold Haiti together in this time of extreme stress. Yesterday, President Clinton and I agreed that he would do his utmost, first to mobilize support and funding for this effort and for others aimed at meeting Haiti's urgent needs and, secondly, to help lay a firm foundation for Haiti's longer-term future. As he said at our meeting, if this task is handled properly, we will have an opportunity to help Haitians reinvent their country. I urge the Assembly to do its part. Haiti's recovery must begin with its people, who are strong and resilient and impatient to get to work rebuilding their lives and their country.

To succeed on all those fronts, we need a clear and concrete sense of gaps and needs. That is why I have directed United Nations agencies to work with the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and others to begin an immediate post-disaster needs assessment. A number of Member States have called for a reconstruction conference. A preparatory meeting will be held in Montreal, Canada, on Monday. I have asked Under-Secretary-General John Holmes of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNDP Administrator Helen Clark to attend that important gathering.

Haiti has never been more in need. I thank the Assembly for its efforts on behalf of the people of Haiti, and for adopting today's two draft resolutions.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.42.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I would like to reiterate our deepest sympathy and solidarity to the people and Government of Haiti and to pay tribute to the United Nations staff and international peacekeepers who have lost their lives in the tragic events in Haiti. Brazil is honoured to present the draft resolution on the earthquake in Haiti, contained in document A/64/L.42 and entitled "Humanitarian assistance, emergency relief and rehabilitation for Haiti in response to the devastating effects of the earthquake in that country".

Since the draft resolution was submitted, the following countries have become sponsors: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, the Central African Republic, the Comoros, the Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Finland, France, the Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, the Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav

Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, Viet Nam, Yemen and Zambia.

The draft sends a strong and clear message of support from the General Assembly and Member States to the people and Government of Haiti in this hour of dire need. While expressing the condolences and reiterating the solidarity of the international community, it outlines actions and measures needed to assist Haiti not only in the present humanitarian relief phase, but also in the efforts for early recovery, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development in the medium and long terms.

The international community has responded with prompt and generous support to the rescue efforts and emergency assistance for the affected populations, but additional resources are needed in order to overcome the emergency and ensure the transition from relief to reconstruction and development. In this regard, the draft further appeals to all Member States and relevant organs and bodies of the United Nations system, as well as the international financial institutions and development agencies, to provide speedy, sustainable and adequate support for Haiti, including with regard to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. It also calls on the international community to provide additional assistance, at the earliest, in response to the United Nations flash appeal for Haiti launched 15 January 2010.

The draft welcomes the leadership of the Secretary-General, as well as the coordinating role of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in support of the Government of Haiti. They have been instrumental in ensuring a speedy and coherent response to the emergency.

In this regard, the draft duly recognizes that, in the weeks and months to come, it will be especially important to explore ways for enhanced coordination for the reconstruction and development efforts in Haiti in the long haul. The people and Government of Haiti should be able to count on the support of the international community long after the attention of the international media is diverted to other issues.

Before concluding, I would like to submit the following technical revisions to the draft resolution.

In the fifth preambular paragraph, the term "Member States" should be added to the fourth line so that the clause reads "relief assistance and rescue operations provided on the ground by Member States, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the United Nations system".

Also, in the third line of the seventh preambular paragraph, the titles of the posts mentioned in the text should be rectified to read "Emergency Relief Coordinator and Resident/Humanitarian Relief Coordinator for Haiti".

Finally, the words "humanitarian and" should be added to the fourth line of the eleventh preambular paragraph so that it reads "coherent and coordinated among all humanitarian and development actors".

On behalf of the sponsors, I would like to submit the present draft, as orally revised, for adoption by consensus by the General Assembly.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.43.

Mr. Ali (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the honour to address the General Assembly on behalf of the Group of 77 and China to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/64/L.43. I wish to announce that Japan and the Republic of Korea have joined the sponsors of the resolution.

The developing countries face tremendous challenges caused by long-term natural disasters and resulting massive losses of life, property and infrastructure, as well as negative social, economic and environmental consequences.

One natural disaster may, in one night, reverse decades' worth of socio-economic development efforts. The negative impacts of climate change, the global financial and economic crisis, and increased food prices can be additional challenges to Member States, and especially developing countries, in their humanitarian response to natural disasters.

Draft resolution A/64/L.43 is one manifestation of the international community's determination to confront these challenges. The draft resolution stresses the importance of promoting international cooperation to support the efforts of countries affected by natural disasters, especially in the areas of preparedness, early

recovery and development in order to limit the negative impacts of natural disasters.

It also emphasizes the need to promote national risk-reduction capacities at all stages of the management of natural disasters and to integrate those goals into development plans, especially in regions vulnerable to natural disasters, such as urban areas. The draft resolution also stresses international cooperation in supporting the capacity-building of developing countries so they may benefit from the use of space-based technologies such as the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response. The draft resolution also encourages the increased use of space-based and ground-based remote-sensing technologies and the exchange of geographical data for early warning of natural disasters and risk-reduction preparedness.

The draft resolution also refers to the need to increase funding and the provision of human resources and necessary expertise, especially with regard to post-disaster recovery. It also calls on the United Nations and its humanitarian and development agencies to support national capacities to mitigate the impacts of natural disasters, including by providing immediate humanitarian and other assistance following such disasters.

Draft resolution A/64/L.43 also encourages all Member States to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian and development assistance provided in the context of international efforts. It also calls on the Secretary-General to continue to improve the international response to natural disasters and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, and to include in his report recommendations on how to address the gaps from relief to development, and the capacity of the United Nations to accelerate rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts.

In conclusion, I would like to express the gratitude of the Group of 77 and China to Mr. Carlos Suárez, who successfully assumed responsibility for coordinating the negotiations on draft resolution A/64/L.43. I should also like to thank the delegations that took part in the negotiations in a spirit of responsibility and flexibility. As in past years, we look forward to the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

The Acting President: The Assembly will first take a decision on draft resolution A/64/L.42, as orally revised.

Draft resolution A/64/L.42, as orally revised, is entitled "Humanitarian assistance, emergency relief and rehabilitation for Haiti in response to the devastating effects of the earthquake in that country". I should like to inform the Assembly that Grenada, Haiti, San Marino and Tunisia have joined the draft resolution as sponsors.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.42, as orally revised?

Draft resolution A/64/L.42, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 64/250).

The Acting President: Before we continue, I should like to consult the Assembly with a view to proceeding immediately to consider the draft resolution contained in document A/64/L.43. In that connection, as the draft resolution has only been circulated this morning, it would be necessary to waive the relevant provision of rule 78 of the rules of procedure, which reads as follows:

> "As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting."

Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees with that proposal.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: We shall now take action on draft resolution A/64/L.43, which is entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development". May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.43?

Draft resolution A/64/L.43 was adopted (resolution 64/251).

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Haiti.

Mr. Mérorès (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): The Haitian Government welcomes the initiative of Brazil and our many friends to introduce resolution 64/250, entitled "Humanitarian assistance, emergency relief

and rehabilitation for Haiti in response to the devastating effects of the earthquake in that country". My Government also welcomes the Assembly's timely adoption of resolution 64/251, entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development".

Resolution 64/250 reflects the great and generous outpouring of compassion and solidarity from the international community to the Haitian people at a time of enormous pain. The Government of Haiti would also like to thank all the Member States that sponsored the resolution, as well as the other members of the General Assembly that have just adopted it.

The dreadful catastrophe that recently struck my country gives me yet another opportunity to express to the international community the deep gratitude of the Haitian people and Government for its formidable display of solidarity and compassion towards our people, who have been mercilessly punished by the fury of the seismic event of 12 January.

It was with horror and great sadness that we learned of the deaths of our friends and colleagues members of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, who lost their lives in the line of duty in the cause of peace. At this very trying time of great pain and national anguish, I would like, on behalf of the Government of Haiti, to express our sincere condolences to their friends and families, as well as to the larger United Nations family.

This is also an opportunity for me to thank the Organization and all the staff of the United Nations system, who are not just working tirelessly during the rescue phase but are also already planning for the country's reconstruction. I should like to express the great gratitude of the Haitian people and Government to all the rescue teams on the ground, including non-governmental organizations, who, in a spirit of enormous generosity and despite their own losses, have done outstanding work for more than a week to save lives and alleviate the suffering of my fellow Haitians.

As the Secretary-General mentioned a few moments ago, the toll in human lives, injured and missing persons and property damage has been overwhelming. To date, more than 80,000 dead have been buried. It is estimated that there are over 200,000 total dead and thousands of missing people, with one third of the overall population believed to be affected. Likewise, thousands of foreign residents and transients have also perished.

Public buildings, schools, hospitals and banks have been almost entirely levelled. All the buildings representing the authority of the State lie in ruins. The Government has virtually no physical premises. As Members will have seen in various images broadcast on television, the presidential palace, the parliament building, the house of justice, the chancellery and the hall of ministries have all have been destroyed. The result is that the Haitian Administration is currently working at a slow pace. The Port-au-Prince port, our telecommunications equipment, the general tax directorate and the general post office have all virtually disappeared. The vast majority of residential houses have been destroyed and the population is virtually in the streets, without shelter. Suffering, hunger, thirst and shortages of all sorts can be seen. Of course the needs are huge and require immediate responses.

Faced with this tragedy, the international community has come forward with great compassion, and it is with heartfelt gratitude that we welcome the exceptional efforts of all the friendly, brotherly countries that have rushed to our side.

Despite these horrifying circumstances, I want to convey our hope and belief that Haiti will rise again and embark on the path of genuine reconstruction, thanks to the courage and resolve of our people and with the help of the international community.

Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

At the outset, we wish to express once again our sincere and deepest condolences to and solidarity with the Government and people of Haiti, as well as to other nations and to the United Nations itself, for the massive loss of life and devastation caused by the earthquake that struck the capital of Haiti, Port-au-Prince, and surrounding areas on 12 January, aggravating the country's already fragile situation. We share the grief of the families of the deceased and express our sympathy and support to the injured and to all who were seriously affected by the catastrophe.

The European Union welcomes the immediate global response of the international community to this humanitarian crisis and fully supports the central and

general coordinating role of the United Nations in the international relief effort.

The European Union and its member States responded rapidly by providing humanitarian emergency assistance and deploying humanitarian and civil protection experts. The first priority has been to dispatch search-and-rescue teams, including military and civil engineering teams. Current efforts are focused on providing emergency health services, water, food, sanitation, medical facilities, shelter, logistics and telecommunications, among many other urgent needs, to the people of Haiti.

There is also a need for adequate security on the ground to ensure access to and the distribution of aid without hindrance, which will rely on the crucial cooperation of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and of countries that are in a position to lend their assistance at this critical phase. The European Union and its member States stand ready to provide additional assistance on the basis of the ongoing needs assessment, including military and civil resources, at the request of the Government of Haiti and the United Nations.

Since the earthquake of 12 January, several strong aftershocks have struck southern Haiti. This highlights the position of extreme vulnerability in which the Haitian people find themselves and the fact that the humanitarian and recovery effort will take time.

Nevertheless, the greatest possible synergies between all components of the response to this challenge must be ensured, both in the short term and in the medium to long terms. In this respect, we support the efforts being undertaken by the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy for Haiti, former President Clinton, as just announced by the Secretary-General.

The task before us will require a strong and sustained mobilization of the entire international community. The European Union has started work to that end by holding an special meeting of ministers for foreign affairs and cooperation devoted to the humanitarian crisis in Haiti. This meeting was held in Brussels on 18 January and chaired by the European Union High Representative, Mrs. Ashton. She will be here in New York today to meet with the Secretary-General. At that meeting, the European Union called for the convening of an international conference on reconstruction in Haiti once the needs for the post-emergency phase have been assessed. We welcome the preparatory meeting that Canada will host in Montreal on 25 January, and the European Union will, of course, attend that meeting and play an active role in its deliberations.

Yesterday, at the meeting convened by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, I announced the initial contribution to be made by the European Union and its member States within the framework of the humanitarian flash appeal launched by the United Nations.

Today, we reiterate our commitment in resolution 64/250, which was just adopted by consensus and which sends a strong message of solidarity and support to Haiti. We welcome in particular the work done by the delegation of Brazil in this regard and the support of all delegations to this important resolution, as evidenced by the many sponsors and the speed with which the Assembly was able to respond to this crisis.

Mr. St. Aimee (Saint Lucia): I speak on behalf of the 14 member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). We thank all those who sponsored resolution 64/250 for exhibiting the commitment of the international community to come to the aid and assistance of one of its members in this sad and trying time.

For us in the Caribbean region, Haiti — the symbol of freedom from time immemorial, the promoter of regional collaboration and assistance to its neighbours from its birth and the symbol of struggle against oppression and injustice from the time of its independence — holds a special place in our hearts. Unfortunately, all those symbols weighed heavily on Haiti, and the Haitian people have not been able to play their role as they should have, both in the region and in the wider sphere.

Yet we must not forget what Haiti stood for in its glory days and the very principles that enabled some, if not all, of us here in this Hall to take our rightful place among the community of nations. That is why Haiti and the resilient Haitian people need our help.

Over the past week, the international community has witnessed one of the worst natural disasters in history, as the massive earthquake in our sister CARICOM country of Haiti and its tragic aftermath caused untold suffering, death and destruction in a Member State least able to handle such a catastrophe.

Today, Haiti finds itself in dire need of our assistance, and I am glad to see that our memories have not been blunted by our successes and better fortunes. On all accounts, the response of the international community has been overwhelming, and we commend all involved.

In times like this, it is so refreshing to be part of the membership of this great body that is called the United Nations. Whatever our shortcomings in other areas, we remain truly a united body, helping and aiding when necessary. That is the message of resolution 64/250, and that is why we in CARICOM fully associate ourselves with its message. I must say that it is unfortunate that we need to wait for such catastrophes to bring out the best in our institution. Maybe we will change.

We in the Caribbean, though facing our own challenges and with our limited resources, understand our obligation to a sister island and a people that shares the same aspirations and is situated in the same path of hurricanes and hotspots of earthquakes. We are aware that it is Haiti today and maybe another one of us tomorrow. In fact, as we speak, aftershocks are still occurring in the region. One occurred just this morning, with a magnitude of 6.1.

We are also aware that, when the dust has settled on immediate needs and the losses are counted, the larger task of rebuilding will equally require our efforts, assistance and generosity. The best guarantee against future catastrophes, whether in Haiti or elsewhere, is assistance for self-reliance and sustainability. We must plan now for the next phase and commit now to the sustainable programmes that will help the victims and others in Haiti to overcome the stresses, the traumas and the memories of what took place there on January 12.

Even now, coordination of both the regional response efforts in Haiti and other response efforts will require significant attention. Although several CARICOM countries have readily available bilateral assistance, CARICOM will very soon define a niche, geographic or thematic, to target its intervention in Haiti. Based on reports, the operational scenario will require the total self-sufficiency of the assets deployed. For example, the sustainability of personnel being deployed in the field for an extended period is an issue for consideration.

Given the language that many of us share with Haiti, Creole, assets with that language capability are encouraged, especially for the long-term development challenges, where technical and technology transfer will be required in such fields as agriculture, reforestation and small enterprise development — all necessary for the long-term reconstruction and sustainability of Haiti.

I may sound as though the entire Caribbean region suffered the catastrophe, and truly we did since, in a small subregion such as ours, what affects one affects all. We also mourn with those of other nationalities who perished in the disaster. We extend our sympathies to the families and friends of United Nations staffers who gave their lives to the cause of helping Haiti re-establish its democracy. We extend our encouragement to the staffers who are there now, helping in the aftermath. We extend our thanks to all those brave men and women from all over and in diverse fields who themselves are living under stressed conditions to bring support to Haiti. History will not forget their deeds and will remember all those who gave so willingly and unselfishly.

A successful operation in Haiti will greatly enhance the standing of the United Nations, especially coming after what is perceived as a less than successful climate change negotiation. The resolution adopted today presents just such an opportunity, and that is why the Caribbean Community associates itself with it and thanks again its initiator, Brazil, the other sponsors and this body for the consensus reached on this resolution.

Mr. Normandin (Canada) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of Canada, I would like at the outset to convey our most heartfelt condolences to the people of Haiti following the violent earthquake that struck the country. I would also like to extend our sympathies to the family and colleagues of the United Nations for the loss of their loved ones. We grieve with them.

Canada has always had very close relations with Haiti and is determined to support the people of that country, working in close cooperation with the Government of Haiti and the United Nations in these difficult times. It is entirely appropriate that we should gather here today in this Hall to show our solidarity with Haiti by adopting resolution 64/250. We thank Brazil for this initiative. In adopting that resolution, the General Assembly is sending a clear message to the people of Haiti: We are at your side.

(*spoke in English*)

In response to the devastation caused by the earthquake, Canada has so far committed $135 million to humanitarian assistance in Haiti. This includes a $60-million contribution to the United Nations flash appeal for Haiti to fund essential necessities and basic services provided on the ground by United Nations agencies and for interventions in the areas of health, nutrition, protection, water and sanitation. In addition to this contribution, other Canadian assistance in support of the relief efforts has included search and rescue response, the provision of supplies and equipment, and Canadian Forces military assets.

Canada is pleased to note the speed and intensity with which the international community has responded to this disaster. Canada would like to commend the Secretary-General, the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the entire United Nations team for the swiftness of the United Nations response. At times like these, the United Nations has a key coordination role to play, and this is why Canada has been working closely with the United Nations and other donors in Haiti to make sure that our assistance is coordinated through the United Nations system, supporting the priorities set by the Government of Haiti, and channelled to where it is needed most.

All of our efforts are, of course, currently focused on the immediate needs of the Haitian people, but we also have to start thinking about the future, the transition to recovery and reconstruction. Canada will host a conference in Montreal on 25 January that will constitute a first step in this direction. Amongst other things, it will pave the way for a much larger conference on reconstruction, to be held at a place and time yet to be determined.

Once again, today's resolution sends a strong signal to the Government and the people of Haiti: We stand with you during these difficult times.

Mr. Zhang Yesui (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to thank you, Madam, and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for the briefings on the latest developments after the earthquake and the international relief efforts in Haiti. We thank the delegation of Brazil for submitting resolution 64/250 on the earthquake in Haiti to the General Assembly. We are pleased to note that the resolution has the support of all Member States. That will send a positive signal of unity to the international community.

On behalf of the Chinese Government and people, I wish to express our deep sympathy and condolences over the heavy casualties and loss of property caused by the earthquake, and our sadness and condolences over the unprecedented casualties suffered by the United Nations.

Since the earthquake, China has done what it can to provide support and assistance to Haiti. Since its arrival in Haiti on 13 January, the Chinese emergency rescue team has worked strenuously at the forefront of disaster relief in the country. The Red Cross Society of China provided $1 million in emergency aid to Haiti. The Chinese Government also provided 30 million yuan — approximately $4.4 million — worth of supplies to the country. The first batch of supplies arrived in Haiti on 17 January and the second, which was delayed due to the limited capacity of Haiti's airport, will be delivered on 26 January.

Yesterday, the Chinese Government announced its decision to contribute $2.6 million to the United Nations flash appeal for Haiti. To date, China has provided over $8 million in assistance to Haiti in cash or in kind. In addition, in light of the urgent needs of the earthquake areas, yesterday the Chinese Government decided to send a 40-member medical and epidemic prevention team to Haiti and to provide medicine and medical equipment to the country.

We note that the disaster relief efforts in Haiti are now in full swing. The Chinese Government appreciates the timely and effective response of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the relevant United Nations disaster relief agencies. The United Nations is universally recognized for its work in international humanitarian relief and development. In the areas of humanitarian relief, early recovery, reconstruction and long-term development, the United Nations has not only the authorization of Member States, but also expertise and technological advantages. In recent years, the United Nations has accumulated in-depth experience and established an effective coordination mechanism in response to emergencies such as the Indian Ocean tsunami and the Myanmar cyclone.

Enhancing the coordination of humanitarian assistance and strengthening planning for reconstruction efforts are two priority areas for disaster relief in Haiti at this time. On the one hand, the United Nations needs

to maintain close cooperation with the Haitian Government, integrate the disaster relief efforts of all parties, and improve the efficiency of relief efforts. On the other hand, if international aid is to be utilized effectively, it is imperative that the issue of reconstruction be taken fully into account in the current rescue and relief phase and integrated into the disaster relief efforts. We hope that the United Nations will strengthen coordination in that regard. We support the early establishment, through effective planning and speedy action, of a United Nations reconstruction coordination mechanism that will help to coordinate international relief efforts in Haiti, make the best use of relief funds and facilitate reconstruction efforts.

As the rotating President of the Security Council for this month, China has maintained close contact and cooperation on the issue of Haiti with the parties concerned. After the earthquake, the Security Council reacted immediately. It convened several meetings and issued two press statements by the President on the situation in Haiti (SC/9842 and SC/9846). On 19 January, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1908 (2010), by which it decided to send an additional 3,500 peacekeepers to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. The resolution will greatly facilitate the security, disaster relief and reconstruction efforts in Haiti.

Before concluding, I wish to thank the representative of the Sudan for submitting to the General Assembly, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, resolution 64/251, entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development". We welcome its adoption by the General Assembly by consensus.

Mr. Núñez Mosquera (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to convey the condolences of the Cuban people and Government to the Haitian people and Government, the countries that have suffered the loss of their nationals in the earthquake in Haiti, and the United Nations family.

The United Nations is facing a new challenge. Assistance to the brotherly people of Haiti is a very urgent and manifest need. At the time of the disaster, over 400 Cuban workers were working selflessly and without pay in Haiti. The Cuban doctors began to offer their services from the first moment after the earthquake. It was the most significant medical assistance that the Haitian people received in the first 72 hours.

Immediately after the earthquake, more than 60 additional workers from the Cuban health service, with experience in similar emergency and disaster situations, joined the assistance work for our Haitian brothers. Moreover, there are 240 Haitian residents and students in their fifth year of medical training in Cuba. Many other young Haitians, trained as doctors in my country, also immediately joined the task of saving lives. As of 8 p.m. on 20 January, they had treated 14,551 patients and had carried out 1,252 surgical interventions. Cuban doctors are working at 21 assistance centres in the capital, the surrounding area and other departments of the interior. Cuba has set up 14 operating theatres, with 16 surgical teams.

Cuba reiterates its readiness to cooperate on the ground with all nations in order to help the Haitian people and to save more lives, given that it already has the staff and infrastructure in that country necessary for such a task. Over 100 specialists from various countries, including Venezuela, Nicaragua, Chile, Spain, Mexico, Colombia and Canada, as well as 17 nuns, are also working with their Cuban co-workers on the ground. The Haitian people need the international community's support. That support should not be limited to addressing the damage caused by the earthquake that shook Haiti.

Cooperation and assistance for Haiti should continue in the future, in close coordination with the Haitian Government and in full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention, including in domestic matters. The United Nations has an important role to play in this process that should be neither ignored nor supplanted.

Cuba has provided free and disinterested medical assistance to the Haitian people since December 1998. To date, 6,094 Cuban participants have worked in Haiti's Haitian medical sector. They have carried out more than 14 million medical consultations and 250,000 operations. They have also assisted in more than 100,000 deliveries and saved over than 230,000 lives. Since 2004, thanks to Operation Miracle, 47,273 people in Haiti have received eye operations. Cuba has hosted the training of 917 Haitian professionals, including 570 doctors. At the moment, 660 young Haitians are studying in my country, including 541 who are being trained in medicine. The

cooperation between Cuba and Haiti also extends to several other fields, including education, agriculture, energy, fisheries and communications. As a result of that cooperation, 160,030 people in Haiti have learned to read.

These statistics are but a modest illustration of what the international community could achieve with will and determination. The Haitian people need the most resolute support from the international community in their efforts to emerge from the poverty and underdevelopment to which they have been subject during too many years of colonialism, neo-colonialism, military intervention and the imposition of dictatorial regimes. The United Nations is called upon to play a crucial role in achieving that goal.

Mr. Álvarez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I should like to convey to the Permanent Mission of Haiti, and through it to the Haitian Government and people, our heartfelt condolences in connection with the thousands of lives lost as a result of the earthquake. We also wish to extend the same condolences to all the countries that, like ours, have lost fellow citizens to that natural disaster, as well as to the entire United Nations family, which has suffered so much from that event, which took the lives of Hédi Annabi and Luiz Carlos da Costa, its highest officials in Haiti.

The international community has reacted with outstanding solidarity and generosity in the face of this tragic situation. The States Members of the Organization have provided extraordinary support to help alleviate the current situation in Haiti. We appreciate the work of all the people and agencies on the ground. In that connection, we commend the efforts of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, which reflect the ongoing commitment of the United Nations to Haiti.

The adoption of resolution 64/250, which was introduced by Brazil and of which we were a sponsor from the outset, has sent the clear and timely message that countries are united at this time to help a brotherly country. That is why we decidedly support the resolution.

Efforts to help Haiti will, of course, continue beyond this initial humanitarian assistance. For that reason, we should view this event as an opportunity to ensure that, in the near future, Haiti will be able to strengthen its capacities to achieve sustainable development. There is no doubt that this undertaking, in which the affected country must be the principal stakeholder, will require major coordination efforts with the Haitian Government and among international actors. That will be one of the greatest challenges we will face in the future as States Members of the Organization.

Mrs. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, we reiterate our condolences to the brotherly Government and people of Haiti, the United Nations family and all the countries that have lost citizens in this catastrophe.

Nicaragua, a country that has been beset by countless natural disasters, including a devastating earthquake in the 1970s, feels the pain of its Haitian brothers. Our solidarity has been evident since the initial aftermath of the earthquake. We have saved lives. We have acted with affection, humanity and the generous heart for which the Nicaraguan people are known. We have already deployed various humanitarian missions, including special rescue and medical brigades, medicine and tons of food. In line with our capacities, we are now working to provide as much medical care as possible.

Developing countries share what they have and not what they have left over, for we have nothing left over. Many other brotherly peoples in the international community have also responded in solidarity to this suffering and sought to alleviate the impact of the tragedy by providing meaningful humanitarian assistance. Nevertheless, it is regrettable to see how some are exploiting this painful situation to take control of a brotherly country mired in blood by occupying it with excessive military troops, who are in many instances creating hurdles and impeding the delivery of assistance to our Haitian brothers. That is the reality of what is taking place on the ground, and we must not ignore it.

We take this opportunity to ask the United Nations system to strengthen its leadership of the coordination of humanitarian assistance and, eventually, of reconstruction, in accordance with the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations. No one should assume for himself the right to shape the destiny of a people suffering and dying helplessly as a result of catastrophe. The people and Government of Haiti should guide their own destiny.

Nicaragua stresses the need for timely periodic reports on the implementation of the resolution 64/250

so that we can improve on the progress made and face and overcome obstacles. We should send the Haitian people the clear message that our solidarity does not have a hidden agenda and seeks only to continue to save lives and to provide medium- and long-term support during the various stages of the recovery and reconstruction process.

Nicaragua joined the consensus on resolution 64/250 as a manifestation of its deep solidarity with the brotherly Haitian people, but we warn that the omission of any reference in the resolution to the presence of foreign troops should not be interpreted as an open door for military occupation. What Haiti needs are doctors, engineers, teachers, construction materials and the strengthening of its agriculture production, not soldiers. A situation as serious as that of Haiti should not be politicized or exploited to justify special interests; rather, it should be an opportunity for the countries of the world to unite in solidarity under the joint slogan "Haiti is not alone. The international community is with you. With your efforts and our support, you will come through."

Mr. Manjeev Singh Puri (India): The Government and the people of India are shocked and deeply grieved by the loss of human life and the damage that have resulted from the catastrophic earthquake in Haiti. India is familiar with the consequences of natural disasters and therefore fully understands the trauma and the suffering that the Haitians are living through. I reiterate the solemn pledges of the President and the Prime Minister of India to stand shoulder to shoulder with our Haitian brothers and sisters in their moment of sorrow. We will do whatever is in our power to partner with the people of Haiti in their journey to rebuild their lives and their nation.

We would also like to commend the United Nations and the international community for the swift and rapid response that has been mounted to assist the people of Haiti in their hour of need.

Immediately on hearing the news of the earthquake, the Government of India initiated measures to assist Haiti. On 15 January, we announced a cash contribution of $5 million towards relief measures as a token of India's solidarity with the people of Haiti. That assistance is being sent to the Government of Haiti through its Permanent Mission here in New York.

The Government and the people of India also pay homage to the men and women of the United Nations family, including one of our own, who were struck down at their posts. The loss to their near and dear ones is irreplaceable. It might, however, be some consolation that they fell in the service of humanity and while working for a greater good. The greatest tribute to them will be the continuation of their work in Haiti — a cause for which they gave their lives.

My delegation would again like to convey our condolences to the injured and the family members of those who have died on account of the earthquake. We have no doubt that the people of Haiti have the strength and resilience to overcome this immense natural disaster.

In conclusion, our delegation was happy to co-sponsor resolution 64/250, which was adopted earlier today. At this forum, we want to express our appreciation to the delegation of Brazil for having piloted the resolution.

Mr. Solón-Romero (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, on behalf of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, I wish to express our solidarity, condolences and respect to the Haitian people and the relatives of the victims. The terrible earthquake that shook the city of Port-au-Prince on Tuesday, 12 January, was one of the most violent and deadly in the history of the Caribbean. The damage that it caused in barely 60 seconds was devastating.

That human tragedy should prompt us to express humankind's deepest feelings of solidarity in the most selfless way and without the least political calculation. Humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction of Haiti must be undertaken in the fullest respect for Haiti's sovereignty. This human tragedy must not be used for any geopolitical strategy or to promote the business of private firms. Humanitarian assistance must take place in the fullest respect for the principles of international law, putting food, water, health and housing assistance and support for the relatives of the victims ahead of promoting a disproportionate military presence.

In that regard, we note and are concerned by the presence of approximately 11,274 additional United States troops, as stated in a report issued by the White House on 18 January. We are concerned that the issue of Haiti is being treated as a security issue before one of humanitarian assistance. We need to know under what mandate those 11,274 troops — a force greater than the

United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti — are operating.

The best way to support Haiti at this time is by immediately forgiving its entire external debt, as some countries and institutions are already doing. Likewise, financial aid must be in the form of donations without any kind of credit conditions. One way to help Haiti is to give the overseas brothers of Haiti the right to work in order to increase remittances to the country that will contribute to its reconstruction.

The reconstruction of Haiti is a task to which we all must contribute, learning from the lessons of the past by overcoming the neo-colonialism and interventionism that are to a great extent the causes of the poverty in Haiti. We want to promote and are resolutely committed to Haiti's reconstruction by Haitians and for Haitians, with the help of the entire international community.

What we have just seen in Haiti is just a tragic example of what can happen to any of our countries and to the entire planet if we are not able to unite in the most important battle of this century — the fight against climate change and the defence of our mother Earth.

Ms. Blum (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to reaffirm the solidarity of the people and the Government of Colombia with the Haitian people and Government in the difficult humanitarian situation being experienced by the brotherly country of Haiti owing to the earthquake of 12 January.

We thank the delegation of Brazil for having led the consultations to ensure that the General Assembly could today adopt resolution 64/250, on Haiti. The resolution sends a message about the political commitment of all Member States and of the international community to provide Haiti with the cooperation and support it needs in the face of this humanitarian emergency, as well as to carry out the processes of early recovery, reconstruction and transition towards sustainable development.

The immediate response of the international community in the face of this humanitarian situation has been crucial and will continue to be essential in the coming months. Colombia acknowledges the valuable work done by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which expeditiously put together the flash appeal to mobilize the necessary cooperation for Haiti during the humanitarian and early recovery phase.

Colombia has supported humanitarian assistance efforts while taking into account the priority areas that have been identified by the United Nations. To that end, with a view to contributing to response efforts, at the very outset the Government of Colombia put in place a coordinated effort involving the entities that comprise our national system for disaster prevention and action.

To date, Colombia has deployed five cargo planes and a naval ship to provide humanitarian assistance to Haiti. Two hundred and fifty persons have travelled to Haiti to provide assistance in various areas, including medical personnel and search and rescue experts. More than 400 tons of in-kind assistance have been sent to Haiti, including donations from the Colombian people.

In addition, the Government of Colombia has provided cash support to the World Food Programme to carry out its activities in Haiti. I should also like to report that, in its capacity as Chair of the Management Board of the Agency for Cooperation and Development of the Organization of American States, Colombia has proposed establishing a special account to support Haiti's reconstruction process. Similarly, the issue of Haiti has had a central place on the agenda of the fifteenth ministerial meeting of the Association of Caribbean States, which is currently being held in Colombia. The people and the Government of Colombia will continue to extend their cooperation and support in line with existing capacities and experience in the various areas of response.

Coordination is a crucial element in the work being carried out. Coordination is basic to ensuring that emergency assistance for affected populations is provided in an effective, organized and timely manner. In that connection, we would like to underscore the work that OCHA has done to build the proper coordination between agencies and aid workers, as well as in each of the various areas of humanitarian work. Colombia also stresses the importance of ensuring a coordinated and effective response to rehabilitation, reconstruction and the transition towards development during the early recovery stages. In that connection, we support the efforts announced today by the Secretary-General.

Colombia has had its own experiences in responding to serious natural disasters. In 1999, we undertook the recovery and reconstruction of cities affected by a devastating earthquake in our country's main coffee-producing region. The mobilization of resources at the national and international levels made it possible to rebuild urban areas. Resources were administered by a reconstruction fund. That arrangement made it possible to create jobs at the local level. It also allowed for efficient and transparent management that included assistance from UNDP and broad support from civil society institutions, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Today that region is one of our country's most dynamic.

Based on lessons learned and positive practices, we have recommended that we begin now to identify appropriate planning and financing mechanisms for Haiti's recovery and reconstruction that ensure the proper coordination between the Haitian Government and cooperation entities and humanitarian actors. Such mechanisms should ensure the coherence, efficiency and sustainability of efforts while avoiding duplication and loss of focus. They should also serve to contribute to organized financing and project management and implementation with clear responsibility for participation and implementation among the various international bodies, Governments and other governmental and non-governmental assistance entities.

My Government has suggested that such coordination be supported through a multilateral organization or international bodies. We have also called for each participating country and actor to commit itself to specific projects and the reconstruction of specific areas and sectors. All of that should be done in line with the specific technical and human capacities of participants to play an active part both in the face of the urgency of the moment as well as vis-à-vis Haiti's development and future.

We trust that the efforts of Governments and international organizations will make it possible to address both early recovery and reconstruction efforts and the enormous emergency assistance needs that have been identified. Colombia will continue to support United Nations efforts and initiatives to provide an suitable response to this humanitarian emergency and to produce new capacities and the conditions for the economic revival and sustainable development of the Republic of Haiti.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Once more, we reiterate our deep condolences to the Government and the people of Haiti and to the United Nations family on the loss of life, the injuries and the damage they have suffered. We convey our condolences to all the Governments that, like ours, suffered loss of human life.

As we have indicated on numerous occasions, Mexico's Government and society have mobilized on a sustained basis. We are also considering new support measures to be adopted in the near future. We are also part of a number of regional initiatives, to which some colleagues have referred.

We should address the urgent needs of today, but we must also look towards the future and at the fact that, among the countries of the international community, Haiti has in recent decades been one of the most sorely punished in terms of its development. Paradoxically, this unprecedented tragedy provides the United Nations with a historic opportunity to review its overall strategy for Haiti, with a view to fully taking on not just the challenge of contributing to its reconstruction but also that of helping it to overcome the enormous structural deficiencies in the way of its economic and social development, as well as its political and institutional weakness, fully coordinating with Haiti's Government and with key stakeholders.

Let us be clear: this is not about returning the country to its pre-earthquake state. Rather, this is about giving decisive momentum to Haiti's development. We therefore believe that the organs and mechanisms of the system associated with Haiti — from the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti to the various agencies, programmes and funds — should, in a coordinated manner, review the scope of their mandates and activities within their respective areas of responsibility with an eye on Haiti's future. Only in that way will the United Nations be able to fully bring about the coordination that is its role.

Both in the Security Council and in the General Assembly, the delegation of Mexico will continue to promote initiatives to that end. In that context, we welcome today's adoption of resolution 64/250 as a first step.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Government and the people of Venezuela are in mourning owing to the terrible catastrophe that Haiti is experiencing. We would

like to reiterate our condolences over the loss of the lives of thousands of Haitians and also the deaths of citizens of other nations and United Nations personnel.

Natural disasters occur suddenly without warning, ending human lives in seconds. They raze everything in their path, turning splendour and hope into destruction and devastation, showing no mercy towards the poorest and most vulnerable in particular. This time, it was Haiti's turn to once again feel nature's devastating blow, which was aggravated by the disruptive consequences of climate change and the terrible imbalance brought about by a desperately inhumane model of consumerism. Before this devastating tragedy occurred not only was Haiti already impoverished, but it had suffered the plundering and servitude of colonialism, slavery, imperialism and internal tyranny. Those realities plunged Haiti into hardship and terror. The earthquake in Haiti ended up destroying what its worthy people, with so much sweat and effort, had built up in recent years amid many limitations.

Venezuela is a Caribbean country, a brother of Haiti by blood and by tears. Historic ties in the fight for freedom and independence link us to its people. We Venezuelans feel particularly committed to its fate. The selfless solidarity and cooperation of the Bolivarian Government with the Haitian people is a matter of principle. It is a resolute, ongoing and permanent short- and long-term commitment.

To curb the devastating effects of the earthquake in Haiti and to address the humanitarian emergency that is currently paralysing its people, to date the Bolivarian Government has sent more than 7,000 tons of humanitarian aid and a team of over 200 specialists, which grows daily, among whom are doctors, fire fighters, search-and-rescue experts of the Simón Bolívar Humanitarian Task Force, as well as members of the Simón Bolívar International Brigade, who attend every time that natural disasters occur in brother countries. In the coming hours, another 6,000 tons of food and supplies will arrive in Haiti in four ships of the Venezuelan navy. A humanitarian corridor has been permanently established so that, by air and by sea, we Venezuelans can provide the support that the Haitian community needs in these terrible circumstances.

We are implementing a special humanitarian assistance plan for Haiti, seeking to ensure that basic institutions, including health care institutions, can function. Before the earthquake, Venezuela consistently provided ongoing support in that regard. In addition to the 225,000 barrels of diesel and petrol that we have already decided to send to Haiti through the Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A., yesterday our Government announced a donation of another 300,000 barrels of oil to that Caribbean brother country. The delivery of humanitarian aid is being coordinated with the other countries of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas and with friendly countries, such as the Russian Federation, whose aircraft have landed on Venezuelan territory in order to provide humanitarian aid to that Caribbean brother country.

In this unfortunate hour of its history, Haiti needs the immediate and selfless cooperation and help of all peoples and Governments of the world. This terrible situation must be a chance for every one of the countries that make up the United Nations to give Haiti its solidarity and generous support, putting aside evil hegemonic claims to political and military control.

President Hugo Chávez stated recently that "the United States Government is taking advantage of the tragedy that the brotherly people of Haiti is experiencing to occupy it militarily". That concern and warning call have also been voiced by other heads of Government, people's organizations around the world and humanitarian organizations on the ground that have said that what Haiti needs are medicines and joint support, not military intervention.

No country should take advantage of the current situation of despair and vulnerability in Haiti by deploying, as is the case, a huge occupying military force that is bigger, as has already been said here, than the military presence of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti: a military occupation that is being carried out over the corpses and the tears of the Haitian people. The independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Haiti must be preserved and respected, irrespective of the current weakness of Haitian institutions as a result of the dreadful devastating earthquake.

We hope that resolution 64/250, which we adopted by consensus today and which Venezuela endorses, will be an appeal to the world conscience. We must respond to the immediate phase of humanitarian relief, without forgetting that the people of Haiti will continue to need us in the subsequent rehabilitation, reconstruction and development stages, a commitment that Venezuela most naturally and resolutely accepts.

As a Latin American and Caribbean country, brother of Haiti, we sincerely thank the States Members of the United Nations that have generously and promptly responded to the humanitarian emergency that is overwhelming our Caribbean brethren, with whom we have been united since the time of independence and in the fight for freedom and independence.

The work of Brazil in presenting the draft resolution that we adopted by consensus today has been commendable and should be acknowledged.

Ms. Davies (Australia): Five years ago this week, we gathered in this Hall to express condolences for all those affected by the earthquake and tsunamis that struck the Indian Ocean region on 26 December 2004. Today, the General Assembly gathers again, following Haiti's terrible natural disaster, to offer our condolences to the victims and their families and to demonstrate that Haiti has the support of the international community in this dark hour.

Resolution 64/250 signals that we, the States Members of the United Nations, are committed to providing the assistance that Haiti needs in a coordinated and effective way, from the immediate relief phase, through early recovery, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. Australia is pleased to have been a sponsor of the resolution. The resolution that we have adopted today stresses the importance of strengthening Haiti's disaster preparedness capacity and reducing its vulnerability to natural disasters. It is crucial that in rebuilding Haiti, we build back better and integrate disaster risk reduction into all development strategies, helping to avoid another disaster of this magnitude.

So far, Australia has pledged 15 million Australian dollars in humanitarian assistance, which will be channelled via the World Food Programme, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency and non-governmental organizations. We will consider further contributions towards Haiti's longer-term reconstruction. Our support demonstrates the strong concern of the Australian community for the desperate situation of Haiti's people.

We all continue to grieve for the valiant United Nations staff who lost their lives in the course of duty. In spite of their own losses, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the United Nations country team immediately set to work to help the Haitian people. The importance of the United Nations role in the coordination of humanitarian assistance has been particularly clear in this emergency, and the United Nations team has done a remarkable job in extremely difficult conditions. We commend their efforts.

We recognize in particular the role of United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes and all the staff of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs involved in the coordination of assistance to Haiti, both on the ground and in New York and Geneva.

Mr. Nwosa (Nigeria): We in Nigeria were shocked at the monumental level of misery, pain and agony arising from the recent earthquake in Haiti. We are therefore grateful to the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting to discuss the way forward in mitigating the human misery in Haiti.

Nigeria laments the damage to lives and property caused by the earthquake and expresses its deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Haiti. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims of the tragedy. We also commiserate with the Secretary-General over the huge personnel losses suffered by the United Nations.

The magnitude of the horror and the significant proportion of the Haitian population who have been subjected to such a high level of penury and destruction are of great pain to the Government and the people of Nigeria. Haitians may have died in their thousands, and so many Haitians may have been consigned to the grave, yet the indomitable spirit of the living remains undaunted and undeterred as to what the future holds. We salute the courage and the resilience of the Haitian people, and we pay deserved tribute to the individuals, organizations, agencies and Governments that have acted swiftly to deal with the consequences of this disaster.

As responsible members of the international community, a community in which the fall of one means the systemic stumbling of the others, this is a time for concerted and coordinated efforts so that we can confront the current challenges and to keep Haiti on the international agenda. That is where the critical role of the United Nations comes in.

Nigeria's 121-strong police contingent on peacekeeping duty in Haiti and volunteer members of the Technical Aid Corps have begun to render their

service to the victims of the disaster. Nigeria recognizes that the current situation in Haiti calls for immediate action, and the urgency that underlines its positive response to the current challenge defines its reaction to this regrettable catastrophe. In that vein, the Federal Government of Nigeria is making an additional financial contribution in the sum of $1.5 million through the Secretary-General. That also informed Nigeria's decision to join in sponsoring resolution 64/250, which was adopted earlier this morning.

Mr. Cuello Camilo (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): At this time of sadness that the world is experiencing owing to the indescribable suffering that befell the Republic of Haiti on 12 January, the Dominican Republic would like to express its sincerest condolences to the people and the Government of Haiti, to the United Nations and to the other countries and organizations that were affected. That is why we are infinitely grateful to the delegations of Brazil and the Sudan for introducing resolutions 64/250 and 64/251, which we have just adopted today.

A few minutes after the disaster occurred in Haiti, President Leonel Fernández arranged for the dispatch of a plane equipped with skilled rescue personnel, trained dogs, first-aid teams, water, telecommunications teams and medicines. From the very beginning, doctors, volunteers and Dominican construction companies have been working together to remove rubble. An operations centre was set up in Jimaní fortress on the border with Haiti, from which were coordinated support for humanitarian assistance activities, the organization of transfers of the wounded and affected persons, access for humanitarian aid and all the coordination needed in such a tragic event.

The ministers of the armed forces, public health and social assistance and public works and communications immediately headed for Haiti in the plane in which President Leonel Fernández dispatched the first humanitarian aid contingent. Both from the air and from our embassy facilities, the destruction caused by the earthquake could be seen in order to assess what assistance to provide in the following days.

By order of President Leonel Fernández of the Dominican Republic, Dominican hospitals to which the injured would be taken were identified. All these hospitals in the Dominican Republic, both close to and far from the border, in cities such as Santiago, Santo Domingo and other towns in the interior of the country, are treating the Haitian wounded who have crossed the Dominican border. Ten mobile kitchens were set up, each able to feed 10,000 people daily. Six ambulances were also mobilized, as well as rescue teams of relief agencies, the Dominican Red Cross, civil defence and the Emergency Operations Commission.

The President of the Dominican Republic, Leonel Fernández, visited Haiti on 14 January, less than 36 hours after the tragic event, and was the first and so far only head of State to visit the country in person. He flew over the disaster area and met with President René Préval at the Haiti airport. They agreed on the implementation of an immediate programme of action to re-establish water, electricity and telecommunications services and to hold an international meeting to plan for the medium- and long-term reconstruction of Haiti.

On 18 January, with the approval and assistance of President Préval and at the initiative of President Fernández, the international meeting was held in Santo Domingo. Participants included representatives of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Canada, Spain, the United States and Brazil. The United Nations was represented by our colleague Edmond Mulet from the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The Vice-President of Spain represented the European Union, and the Organization of American States (OAS) was represented by its Secretary General. The World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank were also represented. They gathered to examine the best way to address this tragic situation.

The countries and organizations present at that meeting agreed to promote the holding of an international conference to prepare a strategic plan for the reconstruction of Haiti that will, above and beyond emergency aid, help to strengthen in the medium and long term Haiti's viability and its political, social and economic stability. That conference will take place in the Dominican Republic.

A coordination committee was created comprised of Haiti, the Dominican Republic, CARICOM, the United Nations, the European Union, the OAS, the Rio Group, the United States, Mexico, Canada, Brazil, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank. This coordination committee will oversee the organization of activities, including the first preparatory meeting, to be held on 25 January in Canada, as

mentioned by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his statement this morning.

A working group appointed by the committee will prepare a draft strategic plan to be submitted for debate at the first plenary meeting. It will be based on three points: the Millennium Development Goals, the Haitian 2010 National Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the World Bank document entitled "Options and opportunities for Haiti".

The expressions of solidarity by the people of the Dominican Republic with the people and Government of Haiti have been wide-ranging. We have held neighbourhood charity drives and telethons. We have postponed repatriations. We have made it easier for the wounded to cross the border and have offered free medical treatment in Dominican hospitals throughout the country for the injured. The Dominican Republic has also become the primary hub for international humanitarian aid to Haiti. Our three airports in Santo Domingo, three airports in the north — in Santiago, Puerto Plata and Samaná — and the Barahona airport, which is 45 minutes from the border at Jimaní, are working at full capacity, managing the hundreds of daily national and international flights bringing emergency aid for Haiti.

Just as a Dominican woman, Sonia Marmolejos, came to the Dario Contreras public hospital in Santo Domingo to breastfeed some of the dozens of Haitian babies affected by this tragedy, so the international community must once and for all make economic development in Haiti a reality. That country's problems have required peacekeeping support for some time, and now, after the earthquake, the reconstruction efforts will be the opportunity for us to take up the challenge of development in Haiti as a part of peacebuilding. Let us take up once and for all, and in an irreversible manner, the task of laying the foundations for sustainable development in Haiti in conditions of social justice and minimizing our vulnerability to the disasters that have historically devastated the Caribbean Basin.

Mr. Keegel (Sri Lanka): My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to Brazil for initiating resolution 64/250, on humanitarian assistance for Haiti, which we adopted today. We also thank the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representative of Haiti for updating us on the relief efforts.

Sri Lanka wishes to join others in this Assembly in conveying once again our deepest condolences to the Government and people of Haiti on the tragic loss of life and property following the devastating earthquake. As a country that faced a similar natural disaster five years ago, we are able to fully empathize with their suffering, and we once again convey assurances of our support and solidarity at this time of great sorrow. We have no doubt that, with the support of the international community and with their own efforts, the Government and people of Haiti will be able to rebuild their country.

Sri Lanka was fortunate not to have lost any of our 1,079 United Nations peacekeepers in Haiti. We are extremely heartened also to hear that our peacekeepers have been playing an important role since the day of the tragedy in search and rescue operations and in the distribution of food and water in the areas worst affected by the disaster.

As a token of our support and solidarity, the Government of Sri Lanka has granted a cash donation of $25,000 to the Government of Haiti and has today decided to send a consignment of essential supplies to the people of Haiti. We will continue to extend our support to the Government and people of Haiti by contributing to the United Nations flash appeal.

We also convey our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his leadership in ensuring that emergency relief assistance reaches the victims of the disaster in a timely manner. We convey through the Secretary-General our condolences to the families of the United Nations staff who lost their lives on 12 January. We recognize the role of the Special Envoy, Mr. Bill Clinton, and the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. John Holmes.

Finally, my delegation conveys its thanks to you, Madam President, for giving us this opportunity to once again renew our commitment to support the people of Haiti at this time.

Mr. Chávez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to reiterate the heartfelt condolences of the Peruvian Government and people to the authorities and people of Haiti, who have been struck by the terrible disaster that has caused irreparable human loss and devastation in the country. In addition, I would like to express my Government's deep sorrow for the many who have gone missing from our United Nations family. I would like to mention in particular our distinguished colleagues Hédi Annabi

and Luiz Carlos da Costa, who spared no effort in their untiring work for Haiti.

From the very beginning, Peru joined the efforts of the international community to support the urgent search and rescue efforts in Haiti. We sent three planes with humanitarian aid, a medical team and a rescue team. My country, as a contributor of troops to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and a member of the Friends of Haiti, also supported and co-sponsored the MINUSTAH troop increases that were necessary so that it could contribute to the efforts for recovery, reconstruction and stability in that fraternal Caribbean nation. We also co-sponsored resolution 64/250, on humanitarian assistance, which was presented by Brazil and which the Assembly has just adopted.

It is comforting to witness the immediate response of the international community and the way that, throughout the world, every possible effort is being deployed to commit resources and aid in order to respond effectively to the challenges that must be overcome in dealing with this human tragedy. We have all witnessed the enormous problems that Haiti has been facing with courage and with international support.

In this grave situation, Peru believes it indispensable for the United Nations, more than ever before, to play a leading role in the difficult endeavour of reconstructing Haiti. In the short term, this task means the collective development of multiple humanitarian assistance efforts, taking into account the number of victims. In this respect, we support the work of the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy and the efforts being deployed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

My delegation believes that is it extremely important to define the steps and procedures that above all will enable us to assess exactly what the needs of the Haitian people currently are. We also need to ensure that all of the assistance that is being distributed is delivered in a coordinated and effective fashion. We should ensure that we have all the tools and means necessary to ensure that aid flows remain constant. United Nations joint coordination is essential to manage all the international cooperation, whether multilateral, bilateral or from the private sector, and to avoid any scattering or overlapping of efforts.

The Government and people of Haiti face a great test, but it should also lead to long-term commitments being made to Haiti by the international community in order to consolidate a process of recovery, reconstruction and economic development in the country. In that spirit, Peru will participate actively at the high-level meeting next Monday in Montreal, Canada. We are confident that it will be a first step in a new and even more committed phase of international cooperation for the reconstruction of Haiti. Peru reiterates its readiness to continue to contribute to this effort.

Mr. Wolff (United States of America): The United States welcomes today's resolution 64/250, on humanitarian assistance, emergency relief and rehabilitation for Haiti. We are working urgently with our international partners, nations around the world, non-governmental organizations and the entire United Nations system to help the people of Haiti recover from the current crisis and rebuild over the long term.

We are also pleased to join the consensus on this year's resolution on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development (resolution 64/251), to help provide timely and effective assistance to communities shaken by natural disasters. The United States remains deeply committed to working in close partnership with our fellow Member States and the United Nations system to respond to natural disasters around the world. We note for the record that this resolution contains a paragraph with a reference to international humanitarian law, which should not be confused with the humanitarian activities or assistance that are the subject of today's resolution. International humanitarian law, to which we are fully committed, is a term that governs situations of armed conflict, not humanitarian assistance.

Regrettably, I must respond to the undignified allegations of three isolated delegations — those of Nicaragua, Bolivia and Venezuela — who have used this sombre occasion in support of Haiti to politicize the matter with ill-informed, tendentious statements. In calling for us all to avoid politicizing the situation in Haiti, they have done just that by alleging ulterior motives and claiming occupation. Another representative, from a large Caribbean island nation, rightly noted the Haitian people's need for help from the international community and the assistance over time in close cooperation with Haiti, which should be

with the full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Haiti. We share that approach.

We are in Haiti at the request of the Haitian Government, with only humanitarian interests in mind. President Préval and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton issued a joint communiqué reflecting that. Today, the Permanent Representative of Haiti expressed the gratitude and appreciation of his Government for all the international assistance his country has received. It would be appropriate for those three countries that have ridiculously alleged conspiracy and occupation, without any foundation, to actually respect the position of the sovereign country of Haiti, about which they claim to be so concerned.

The Acting President: I now call on the observer of the Holy See.

Mr. Bharanikulangara (Holy See): At the outset, the Holy See joins those delegations who have expressed their solidarity with and prayers for those in Haiti suffering in the aftermath of the recent earthquake. My delegation welcomes the adoption of resolution 64/250 as a sign of the international community's solidarity in addressing the needs and challenges of the entire Haitian population.

As we adopt this resolution today, it is those who toil around the clock to rescue people trapped, those who labour to provide medical and humanitarian assistance to the millions left homeless, and those whose hearts ache as they mourn the loss of a child, mother, father or friend who need our continued financial, physical, emotional and spiritual support in this trying time. We pray that these people find the strength, support and assistance they need as the families and communities across Haiti begin to rebuild their country.

As the resolution notes, there are persistent challenges to providing and delivering life-saving humanitarian support. The international community has pledged millions of dollars, and volunteers from around the world have been risking their lives and their security to provide immediate assistance to the Haitian people. The challenges and the need for sustained action will continue long into the future.

For its part, the Catholic Church, with its vast network of organizations already in the country, has been working to provide emergency services and goods. Catholic Relief Services, Caritas Internationalis, Caritas Haiti, the Order of the Servants of the Sick and parishes around the world have responded with millions of dollars in aid and thousands of professionals and volunteers to provide emergency medical and humanitarian aid. The continued engagement of those organizations has enabled an immediate response to the crisis, but it will also be crucial in assuring long-term growth and renewal within the country. In the relief and recovery programmes also, due participation of and cooperation with faith-based organizations and civil society will help ensure more efficient delivery of humanitarian assistance and better implementation of the gradual reconstruction of Haiti.

While we mourn the loss of untold thousands, it is the international community's responsibility to show that in all corners of the globe we will not forget them — in particular those dedicated members of the United Nations family committed to international peace.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/2 of 19 October 1994, I now call on the observer for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Mr. Jilani (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies): I am grateful for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

I would like to express our deepest condolences and sympathy to all the people of Haiti, as well as to the families and friends of the United Nations family, for the tragic loss of so many lives as a result of the earthquake that struck Haiti. Our deepest sympathy and condolences also go out to our colleagues in the Haitian Red Cross.

From the very first days of the disaster, the Red Cross and Red Crescent family started the mobilization of its global network and the deployment of its teams and emergency response units. Today, the Red Cross and Red Crescent family has more than 20 national societies deployed in support of the Haitian Red Cross, with about 20 emergency response units (ERUs) deployed and working. They include a rapid-deployment hospital from the Norwegian and Canadian Red Cross; a field hospital from the German and Finnish Red Cross, which is being established today; more than 35 basic health clinics, which are supported by the American, French, Swedish, German, Finnish,

Spanish, Swiss and Iranian national societies; water and sanitation ERUs from the American, Australian, British, Italian and Danish Red Cross societies; relief shelter, logistics and base camp ERUs and so on. To date, 29 Red Cross and Red Crescent flights have landed in Santo Domingo or Haiti. Yesterday, the Colombian navy vessel *Cartagena de Indias* left its namesake port with 333 tons of relief supplies from the Colombian Red Cross.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent family today has around 400 delegates assisting the Haitian Red Cross in its heroic efforts to bring relief to the suffering and assist the most vulnerable victims of this devastating disaster. More than half of them are from national Red Cross societies of the region.

In closing, allow me to read from the diary of the Canadian Red Cross programme manager who has been living and working in Haiti since September 2009. She was in her apartment in Port-au-Prince when the earthquake struck and immediately went to the Haitian Red Cross office, where she worked with staff and volunteers to provide emergency first aid and triage for more than 250 injured in the first night. This is her account, dated 17 January, five days ago.

> "My days start very early in the morning. I have started a cantina service for our local logistic support staff. I get up early every morning and prepare breakfast with their help. I spoke with the President of the Haitian Red Cross and expressed my concern for the people who were suffering beyond words, and asked for her support. She immediately instructed her staff to assist us in transporting the injured for medical care. I couldn't help it: I gave her a tight hug, tears in my eyes.
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> "Our action saved 10 lives. On the drive back to the office, I still couldn't believe what I was seeing: piles and piles of buildings, smashed cars, destruction and pain and suffering everywhere; an endless sea of people on the streets and camping out in parks. The Haitian Red Cross staff and volunteers are everywhere. Working, moving people, moving equipment, they are trying to salvage what little can be saved from their seriously damaged buildings. Everyone is doing what they can.
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> "We noticed a convoy of seven trucks from the Dominican Red Cross. The head truck driver was asking for directions, so we stopped and directed them to where they were supposed to deliver the medicine and relief items they were transporting. The Spanish Red Cross has started setting up water production plants, as well as distributing water. They were able to distribute 100,000 litres of water in two areas, and they are mobilizing volunteers to help them from one place to another.
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> "When I arrived back at our office, I was informed that search and rescue crews had located about 40 people in the collapsed Caribbean supermarket. They had been given water to drink, and crews were going to try and get them out as quickly as possible.
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> "In the evening, I went to the International Red Cross base camp, and the scene was just amazing. The Canadian delegates had already set up their tents. The Americans were planning their relief distributions. The French were coordinating the arrival of the Norwegian planes and equipment for the field hospital. The Swiss were entering the camp with all their equipment, followed by delegates from the Swedish, Finnish and German Red Cross. The camp looks like the whole world is here, and more are coming."

The Red Cross and Red Crescent family will continue to mobilize the power of humankind and its global network to assist the most vulnerable throughout the relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction phases in Haiti.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker for this morning's debate.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan on a point of order.

Mr. Ali (Sudan): I take the floor to correct an editorial mistake in draft resolution A/64/L.43, which we have just adopted as resolution 64/251. In paragraph 14, the phrase "in full accordance with the provisions of resolution 46/182 and the annex thereto" should read "in full accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 46/182 and the annex contained therein".

I kindly ask that this mistake be corrected.

The Acting President: The Secretariat takes note of that technical correction to the text of draft resolution A/64/L.43.

Several representatives have requested to exercise the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to 5 minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mrs. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would simply like to remind the representative of the United States of the history of the multiple interventions and occupations carried out by his country in the Latin American and Caribbean region, taking advantage of various circumstances, whether of a natural or political character. I kindly ask him not to be so disingenuous. Although his President says that we should not look towards the past, the images of his troops in Haiti today cannot but remind us of the past. We reiterate that what Haiti needs is an army in white coats — teachers and engineers — and not United States Marines.

Mr. Solón-Romero (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We find ourselves obliged to take the floor because a question has been raised as to what facts motivated our statement some minutes ago. The fact is that there is a presence of 11,274 United States military troops on the territory or the coast of Haiti, as acknowledged and publicized in a White House press release. We have every right to wonder why there is a military presence of such magnitude, which exceeds the size of all the contingents that all countries have provided to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, and what is the function of that military contingent.

A second question that representative of the United States has not answered is this: To whom does that United States presence answer? Is it under the command of the United Nations? To us it is basic: what we say should be what we do. If we say that the United Nations is going to coordinate and guide all the international assistance, then we must ensure that that is actually the case.

Regrettably, we have here a problem that cannot be evaded. We want to clearly spell out that that question has not been answered and that we shall continue to ask for an explanation and a correction of the policy that has given preference to military assistance over the type of assistance that is basically of a humanitarian nature.

Mr. Sammis (United States of America): I just wanted to take this opportunity to respond to the statements that we have just heard from a couple of delegations.

First, I would like to reiterate that the American presence in Haiti is intended solely to serve humanitarian purposes and is covered under the communiqué between Haiti and the United States. It is regrettable that those delegations are attempting to exploit the tragedy that is before us now for their own political benefit. But my own Government will focus, along with the rest of the international community, on helping the Government and the people of Haiti to confront this catastrophe.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 70.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.